

Consultation: Children's Services Planning - Provision of Statutory Guidance

Scottish Government response

October 2019



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This is the Scottish Government response to the key findings in the consultation analysis report on the effectiveness of current statutory guidance which supports Part 3 (Children's Services Planning) of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, which was published on 16 September 2019, you can access this via the following link - <http://www.gov.scot/ISBN/9781839601156>

Introduction

Part 3 of the Act places a duty on each local authority and the relevant health board, to jointly prepare a children's services plan for the area of the local authority covering a 3 year period. A range of other relevant local and national bodies are expected to be either consulted, or obliged to participate, at various stages of the development of the plan. It also requires the local authority and relevant health board to jointly publish an annual report detailing how the provision of children's services and related services in that area have been provided in accordance with the plan.

A public consultation on the effectiveness of the statutory guidance took place between 25 March and 17 June 2019. It invited views in advance of the next reporting cycle to test whether the content, scope and format of the statutory guidance was still helpful and fit for purpose or whether it should be modified, amended or improved to further enhance and build on the support available. Forty five responses were received from individuals, third sector organisations, local government, public bodies, trades unions and health boards.

Conclusion

From analysis of the responses received, it is clear that there is a strong shared commitment from everyone involved to work collaboratively on a multi-agency basis, to improve outcomes and ensure all our children and young people achieve their full potential.

The existing guidance was viewed as helpful, flexible and, in the main, fit for purpose. There were a number of areas where it was felt that some minor changes were required which would enhance the current provision. These included ensuring that it better reflects the evolving planning and policy landscape; is easy to access and understand; and emphasises the value of genuine inclusive multi-agency collaborative working to support the effectiveness and efficiency of plan production.

A number of respondents commented that that they welcomed the Scottish Government's engagement and that they were pleased to have been given an opportunity to shape refinement of the guidance.

Next steps

In response to the consultation responses, key findings set out in the analysis report and building on the learning from the Children's Services Strategic Engagement (the Scotland-wide Programme of visits which ran from 5 October 2018 to 10 June 2019), the statutory guidance will be revised to reflect what we have been told and heard and published in advance of the next reporting date.



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